

Offprint:

Infancy Gospels

Stories and Identities

Edited by

Claire Clivaz, Andreas Dettwiler,
Luc Devillers and Enrico Norelli

with the assistance of Benjamin Bertho



Mohr Siebeck 2011

This offprint cannot be purchased from a bookstore.

Matthew 1–2 and the Problem of Intertextuality¹

MOISÉS MAYORDOMO

I. “Intertextualities”: Definitions, Plurality and Power

Biblical scholars entering the field of literary criticism not only step on terminological quicksand, they also get involved with diverging modes of criticism influenced by the power structures within academia. This is especially evident when one tries to grasp the extent of the concept of “intertextuality”.²

1. Intertextuality as a Critical Term

The success story of the term “intertextuality” has been told many times.³ Julia Kristeva coined the word more or less randomly in a study on Mi-

¹ I would like to thank Dr. Jenny Read-Heimerdinger for improving my English.

² Nowadays, the term “intertextuality” is so widespread in biblical studies that it hardly needs to be documented bibliographically. For some recent, theoretically sophisticated contributions, cf. T.R. HATINA, “Intertextuality and Historical Criticism in New Testament Studies: Is There a Relationship?”, in *BibInt* 7 (1999), pp. 28–43; S. ALKIER – R.B. HAYS (eds.), *Die Bibel im Dialog der Schriften: Konzepte intertextueller Bibellektüre* (Neutestamentliche Entwürfe zur Theologie 10), Tübingen: A. Francke, 2005; S. HÜBENTHAL, *Transformation und Aktualisierung. Zur Rezeption von Sach 9–14 im Neuen Testament* (SBB 57), Stuttgart: Kathol. Bibelwerk, 2006; M. SCHNEIDER, *Gottes Gegenwart in der Schrift. Intertextuelle Lektüren zur Geschichte Gottes in 1Kor* (Neutestamentliche Entwürfe zur Theologie 17), Tübingen: Francke, 2011. Within the field of Matthean studies, cf. R.B. HAYS, “The Gospel of Matthew: Reconfigured Torah”, in *HTS* 61 (2005), pp. 165–190; U. LUZ, “Intertexts in the Gospel of Matthew”, in *HTR* 97 (2004), pp. 199–137; S. ALKIER, “From Text to Intertext: Intertextuality as a Paradigm for Reading Matthew”, in *HTS* 61 (2005), pp. 1–18; M. SCHNEIDER – L.A. HUIZENGA, “Das Matthäusevangelium in intertextueller Perspektive”, in *ZNT* 8 (2005), pp. 20–29; L.A. HUIZENGA, *The New Isaac: Tradition and Intertextuality in the Gospel of Matthew* (NovTSup 131), Leiden: Brill, 2009.

³ The following works have been helpful: G. GENETTE, *Palimpsestes: La littérature au second degré*, Paris: Seuil, 1982 (English: *Palimpsests: Literature in the Second Degree*, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997); U. BROICH – M. PFISTER (eds.), *Intertextualität: Formen, Funktionen, anglistische Fallstudien* (Konzepte der Sprach- und Literaturwissenschaft 35), Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1985; M. WORTON – J. STILL (eds.),

khail Bakhtin. The following quotation has a quasi-canonical status in studies on intertextuality:

"[A]ny text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and transformation of another."⁴

Bakhtin himself developed his concept of dialogism on the basis of diachronic studies on the novel in antiquity and the Middle Ages.⁵ Kristeva universalizes these historical insights and uses them in order to displace the concept of intersubjectivity in favour of intertextuality. She thereby challenges radically structuralism's bias for textual immanence, closeness, unity and autonomy. Intertextuality is not just one textual property among others, it is a dynamic function of each and every text.⁶ In other words: textuality is intertextuality.⁷ By dissolving the difference between text and quotation, production and reception, *poiesis* and *mimesis* Kristeva undermines the author's unique status as a God-like genius.⁸ The author is no

Intertextuality: Theories and Practices, Manchester – New York: Manchester University Press, 1990; H.F. PLETT (ed.), *Intertextuality* (Research in Text Theory/Untersuchungen zur Texttheorie 15), Berlin – New York: de Gruyter, 1991; S. HOLTHUIS, *Intertextualität: Aspekte einer rezeptionsorientierten Konzeption* (Stauffenburg Colloquium 28), Tübingen: Stauffenberg, 1993; N. PIÉGAY-GROS, *Introduction à l'intertextualité*, Paris: Dunod, 1996; J. HELBIG, *Intertextualität und Markierung: Untersuchungen zur Systematik und Funktion der Signalisierung von Intertextualität* (Beiträge zur Neueren Literaturgeschichte 141), Heidelberg: C. Winter, 1996; J. KLEIN – U. FIX (eds.), *Textbeziehungen: Linguistische und literaturwissenschaftliche Beiträge zur Intertextualität*, Tübingen: Stauffenberg, 1997; G. ALLEN, *Intertextuality* (The New Critical Idiom), London: Routledge, 2000; K. HERRMANN – S. HÜBENTHAL (eds.), *Intertextualität: Perspektiven auf ein interdisziplinäres Arbeitsfeld* (Sprache & Kultur), Aachen: Shaker, 2007.

⁴ J. KRISTEVA, "Word, Dialogue and the Novel", in T. MOI (ed.), *The Kristeva Reader*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1986, p. 37; French original: "Bachtine, le mot, le dialogue et le roman", in *Σημειωτική: Recherches pour une sémanalyse*, Paris: Seuil, 1969, pp. 143–173, here p. 146: "[U]ne découverte que Bakhtine est le premier à introduire dans la théorie littéraire: tout texte se construit comme mosaïque de citations, tout texte est absorption et transformation d'un autre texte".

⁵ Cf. M.M. BAKHTIN, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, ed. Michael HOLQUIST, Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1981, pp. 41–83; M. HOLQUIST, *Dialogism: Bakhtin and his World* (New Accents), London: Routledge, 2002, pp. 65–103.

⁶ It would be wrong to call this "textual ontology". As T. BENNETT, *Formalism and Marxism* (New Accents), London: Routledge, 1979 (repr. 2003), p. 47 has emphasized: "Literariness resides, not in the text, but in the relations of intertextuality inscribed within and between texts. It is not a 'thing', an essence which the text possesses, but a function which the text fulfils".

⁷ "Text" does not only refer to written texts but to every structure of signs.

⁸ Similarly R. BARTHES, "The Death of the Author" (1968), in S. HEATH (ed.), *Image, Music, Text*, London: Fontana, 1977, pp. 142–148, here p. 146: "We know now that a text is not a line of words releasing a single 'theological' meaning (the 'message' of the Author-God) but a multi-dimensional space in which a variety of writings, none of them

longer a creator *ex nihilo* but rather constitutes the intersection for a multitude of voices. The natural consequence of dislocating the author's and the text's privileged status is that the reading process becomes a constitutive element of interpretation.⁹ The main thrust, however, is to decentralize the powers within the field of literary criticism.

Kristeva has not capitalized on "her" concept.¹⁰ Though her understanding of the range of the term is not necessarily binding for all those who work with it, the critical impetus of its "origins" should not be left aside without further discussion.

2. Intertextuality as a Methodological Concept

The relationship between different texts has been the object of theoretical discussion since antiquity.¹¹ The concept of intertextuality very soon found a new home in the traditional study of literary quotations and allusions, becoming something of a fashionable umbrella term for all aspects of textual references. Especially in the German speaking field, it is rather common to criticize Kristeva's concept of intertextuality for the sake of methodological clarity.¹² The main points of criticism can be summarized as follows: Kristeva blurs any difference between textuality and intertextuality. Without the author, the search for a definitive meaning becomes elusive. An unlimited understanding of intertextuality makes the concept inoperable for the concrete work with single texts.¹³ Kristeva's ideological criticism is itself ideological.¹⁴

original, blend and clash. The text is a tissue of quotations drawn from the innumerable centres of culture".

⁹ Cf. E. ANGERER, *Die Literaturtheorie Julia Kristevas*, Wien: Passagen, 2007, pp. 40–43.

¹⁰ Indeed, she barely has used it after introducing it into the critical discourse (*ibid.*, p. 44).

¹¹ Cf. the historical overview in WORTON – STILL, *Intertextuality*, pp. 2–16. A productive field for the study of intertextuality in antiquity is book titles.

¹² Cf. e.g. M. PFISTER, "Konzepte der Intertextualität", in BROICH – PFISTER, *Intertextualität*, pp. 11–24; W. HEINEMANN, "Zur Eingrenzung des Intertextualitätsbegriffs aus textlinguistischer Sicht", in KLEIN – FIX, *Textbeziehungen*, pp. 21–38; H. TEGTMEYER, "Der Begriff der Intertextualität und seine Fassungen", in KLEIN – FIX, *Textbeziehungen*, pp. 49–81.

¹³ PLETT, *Intertextuality*, p. 4 complains: "This 'school' has never developed a comprehensible and teachable method of textual analyses. Its publications are marked by a strangely abstract quality, at a decided remove from reality".

¹⁴ TEGTMEYER, "Begriff", p. 56.

If we distinguish two different concepts of intertextuality (one “global” and one “local”), much of the discussion becomes futile.¹⁵ Some arguments against Kristeva are based on a misapprehension, especially when her use of the concept is blamed for not being applicable to *concrete* textual work. The idea that texts are part of a complex net of relations in no way leads to the conviction that analyzing concrete textual relations is not a meaningful activity.

3. Intertextuality “in Practice”: Some Suggestions for New Testament Exegesis

“Classical” exegesis has always dealt with questions of how texts are “used” in the New Testament. Exegetes should, therefore, not be alarmed by the idea that written texts are (or can be) labyrinths of quotations and allusions. It seems that Kristeva’s global concept of intertextuality is a fairly good “description” of how texts were produced and received in early Christianity. It is, thus, important to locate textual phenomena within the horizon of textual networks. Intertextuality in practice can be considered from three perspectives:¹⁶

a) Intertextuality from the Author’s Perspective¹⁷

We may start with the truism that every author is also a reader. Intertextual features can thus be considered symptoms of the influences working on the mind of an author. If a pre-text is “isolated” (in its most probable textual form), one can get to the “original sources” of an author and construct an account of his or her intentions. Of course, this is classical source- and redaction-criticism and it should not be given a modern guise by simply calling its author-centered procedures “intertextuality”.¹⁸ An intertextual approach should change the role of the author from an ingenious individual

¹⁵ HOLTHUIS, *Intertextualität* differentiates roughly between typological intertextuality (reference to normative “system texts” similar to Genette’s “architextuality”) and referential intertextuality (relations between two texts).

¹⁶ Cf. for a similar approach (with a strongly semiotic vocabulary) S. ALKIER, “Intertextualität – Annäherung an ein texttheoretisches Paradigma”, in D. SÄNGER (ed.), *Heiligkeit und Herrschaft. Intertextuelle Studien zu Heiligkeitsvorstellungen und zu Psalm 110* (BThS 55), Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 2003, pp. 1–23.

¹⁷ In what follows I will use the term “author” and “narrator” as short-cuts for the external writer(s) and the internal narrating voice. For a theoretical discussion, see M. MAYORDOMO, *Den Anfang hören: Leserorientierte Evangelienexegese am Beispiel von Matthäus 1–2* (FRLANT 180), Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1998, pp. 80–97.

¹⁸ HATINA, “Intertextuality”, pp. 32–33 asks not without irony: “Who would have thought three decades ago that the term ‘intertextuality’ would eventually be adopted by the very group it was intended to dislodge?”

breeding creatively over his sources to the voice of an interpretative community that shapes the numerous ways texts are produced in dialogue with other texts. Within this perspective, the author is not only the subject but also the “object” of texts.

b) Intertextuality as a Quality of Texts

Classification is one of the main objectives (if not obsessions) of textually oriented studies. The multiple possibilities of textual relationships have produced a number of rhetorical concepts like quotation, allusion, plagiarism, travesty, contrafacture, cento, pastiche, palinody, or parody.¹⁹ But even commentaries, translations or, for that matter, the manuscript tradition can be considered as forms of intertextuality. Finding proper ways to grade the quality of intertextual intensity is probably the main challenge of classification. The scale between a tagged literal quotation and a loose allusion or a hypothetically reconstructed source offers apparently innumerable possibilities. Classification models have to be rather complex as the following examples may serve to illustrate:

G. Genette subdivides his main concept of “transtextuality” into five categories:²⁰

- | | | |
|---------------------|--|---|
| 1. Intertextuality: | the use of a text in a new text | quotation, allusion, plagiarism |
| 2. Paratextuality: | the relationship between the main body of a text and its side texts | titles, headlines, prefaces, postfaces, mottoes, blurbs, illustrations, notes, etc. |
| 3. Metatextuality: | a text whose object of reference is another text | e.g. commentary or critical review |
| 4. Hypertextuality: | the relationship of a text with a textual “blueprint” which serves as the basis for the text without being present | e.g. parody, travesty, imitation |
| 5. Architextuality: | the reference of a text to a specific genre model. | |

M. Pfister proposes a complex set of interwoven criteria:²¹

1. Qualitative parameters:
 - a) Referentiality: How does the text refer to a pre-text? Is the pre-text introduced into its new context without focusing any attention

¹⁹ A number of these terms are analyzed in T. VERWEYEN – G. WITTING, *Einfache Formen der Intertextualität: Theoretische Überlegungen und historische Untersuchungen* (Explicatio), Paderborn: Mentis, 2010.

²⁰ GENETTE, *Palimpsests*.

²¹ PFISTER, “Konzepte”, pp. 26–30; cf. LUZ, “Intertexts”, pp. 123–124.

- on its presence or are there explicit signs of usage underlining the character of the quotation? In its most distinctive form of referentiality, the new text becomes a meta-text on the pre-text (e.g. in the form of a commentary).
- b) Communicative relevance: How much are authors and readers aware of the (supposed) intertextual reference? To be sure, pre-texts from a cultural or religious "canon" have a very high degree of communicative relevance.
 - c) Auto-reflexivity: Does the text somehow address its own intertextual procedures?
 - d) Structurality: How strong is the syntagmatic embedding of the pre-text? Is it a casual or rather selective reference or does the pre-text serve as a "blueprint" for the new text?
 - e) Selectivity: How pointed, concise and exclusive is the reference to a pre-text? Is it a literal quotation of a text segment or a vague allusion to a whole text?
 - f) Dialogic relation: What kind of semantic and ideological interaction is triggered by relating one text to another? What kind of influence does the original context of the pre-text exert on the new text? What possible readings of the pre-text can be traced by its new contextual framing?
2. Quantitative parameters:
- a) Density and frequency of intertextual references, and
 - b) number and range of pre-texts.
- R. Hays has presented a set of criteria which have proven especially influential in recent New Testament studies:²²
- 1. Availability: Is it historically plausible that a certain pre-text was available to the author and/or the original readers?
 - 2. Volume: How strong is the quantitative repetition of pre-textual elements?
 - 3. Recurrence: How often does the same author refer to the same pre-text?
 - 4. Thematic coherence: How well does the pre-text fit into the argumentation or narrative plot of its new context?
 - 5. Historical plausibility: Could the thematic contribution of the pre-text have been intended by the author and understood by the readers?
 - 6. History of interpretation: Have other readers recognized the same textual relationships?
 - 7. Satisfaction: Does the proposed reading make sense?

²² R. HAYS, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1989, pp. 29–32.

A recent contribution by Hohl Trillini and Quassdorf tries to account for as many elements as possible by “taxonomic cross-associations”:²³

1. Relation type

What does the later text do with the earlier text? ²⁴	Relation types between earlier and later text
(Element from) earlier text <i>integrated</i> into later text	inter-, archi- and hypertextuality
(Element from) earlier text <i>discussed</i> in later text	metatextuality
(Element from) earlier text <i>translated</i> by later text	translation
(Element from) earlier text <i>listed</i> in later text	anthology
(Element from) earlier text <i>set to music</i> by later ‘text’	music
(Element from) earlier text <i>illustrated</i> by later ‘text’	art

2. Quoted elements and their function in the later text:

<i>Verbal</i> :	phrase, longer passage, complete text, recurring phrases
<i>Thematic</i> :	motif or plot element, plot (complete), genre
<i>Nominal</i> :	title, name (place or character)

The models presented here are simple instruments for the analysis of concrete cases of intertextuality. While Pfister and Hays display greater interest in historical and author-oriented questions (which is why they are used by New Testament exegetes), Genette and Hohl Trillini/Quassdorf have a more textual approach. None of these models can claim a total view of the field, so there is no need for purism. Combining different criteria can serve heuristically to cope with intertextuality in the New Testament, but it will not produce in any positivistic sense a precise measureable scale of intertextual intensity.

c) Intertextuality from a Reader’s Perspective

It is obvious that readers, just as authors, bring all their previous reading experiences to the text. To read a text means basically to understand it in relation to other texts, to reconfigure its meaning according to our

²³ R. HOHL TRILLINI – S. QUASSDORF, “A ‘Key to All Quotations’? A Corpus-Based Parameter Model of Intertextuality”, in *Literary and Linguistic Computing* 25 (2010), pp. 269–286.

²⁴ They ground their concepts in Genette’s classification with two modifications: a) different relation types can converge in one single work (e.g. a text can quote and criticize at the same time); b) the strict separation between intertextuality (quotation) and hypertextuality (adaptation) is not helpful; both terms rather describe the ends of a continuum.

memory.²⁵ Any empirical study will confirm that these intertextual implicatures may not correspond to the intention of the text's historical author.²⁶ As so often, authorial intentions and readers' ways of understanding do not happily come together.²⁷ More important, though, is the change of perspective brought about by looking at the reading process: the main focus is not on classification but on the function intertextual references play in the reception of the possible ways a text can be understood. According to the phenomenology of reading developed by Wolfgang Iser, all social and cultural norms and traditions of past literature which are taken into the literary world (the so-called "repertoire") constitute a relation of foreground and background.²⁸ In the foreground we perceive these elements as part of a sequential reading experience, but in the background they activate the multiple contexts which they are taken from.²⁹ That means that every quotation or allusion to "Scripture" brings the "old" context into the "new", triggering thereby a creative process of imagination difficult to control. Authors can overtly display or playfully hide their intended intertextual references but once the reader is aware of their presence many possible

²⁵ For a historical approach it is, of course, impossible to read "as if" we were the original readers because we never will have access to all the "intertexts" available to them and we will never read or hear these texts within the same social space as they did. Finally, the original readers cannot be constructed as a unified hermeneutical entity.

²⁶ STILL – WORTON, "Introduction", p. 9. An illuminating example can be found in Umberto Eco who, in his dual role as literary theorist and writer, comments on intertextual references which others have detected in his narrative work; cf. U. ECO, *Interpretation and Overinterpretation*, ed. S. COLLINI (Tanner Lectures in Human Values), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992, pp. 72–88.

²⁷ M. RIFFATERRE, "Production du texte: L'intertexte du *Lys dans la vallée*", in *Texte* 2 (1984), pp. 23–33 tries to cope with this discrepancy by making a difference between "mandatory intertextuality" (references which *have* to be recognized in order to understand the text fully) and "aleatoric intertextuality" (connections which readers are free to establish to whatever texts come to their mind). The problem of marking clear borders between the mandatory and the aleatoric is obvious.

²⁸ W. ISER, *The Act of Reading: A Theory of Aesthetic Response*, Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980, pp. 92–96.

²⁹ PFISTER, "Konzepte", p. 29: "Mit dem pointiert ausgewählten Detail wird der Gesamtkontext abgerufen, dem es entstammt, mit dem knappen Zitat wird der ganze Prätext in die neue Sinnkonstitution einbezogen".

connections unfold. Intertextual references are therefore like metaphors³⁰; they are special gifts for mindful and attentive readers.³¹

4. Conclusion

Bearing in mind the hermeneutical and methodological potential of different approaches to intertextuality it seems unwise to decide in favor of one single understanding, either global or local. Much to the contrary, holding both aspects in a critical dialogue can serve as a corrective against inherent shortcomings and thereby prevent the intertextual approach to a concrete set of texts from aiming at a positivistic total understanding.

II. Intertextuality in Mt 1–2

1. Matthean Auto-Reflexivity

As Jonathan Pennington has put it rather poetically: “[W]hen Matthew is cut he bleeds Bible.”³² Not surprisingly, Matthew’s “use” – a highly significant metaphor in itself – of the “Scriptures”³³ has received much critical attention, especially the so-called “formula” or “fulfilment quotations”.³⁴

³⁰ Cf. STILL – WORTON, “Introduction”, p. 12: “[E]very quotation is a metaphor which speaks of that which is absent and which engages the reader in a speculative activity. This speculation centres not on the/a historical source but on the signifying force of a textual segment which, simultaneously within and without the text, can have its origin only in the moment[s] of reading”.

³¹ I borrow the gift-metaphor from a line by Paul Celan used as a title by I. FUSSL, *Geschenke an Aufmerksame: Hebräische Intertextualität und mystische Weltauffassung in der Lyrik Paul Celans* (Conditio Judaica 68), Tübingen: Niemeyer, 2008.

³² J.T. PENNINGTON, “Refractions of Daniel in the Gospel of Matthew”, in C.A. EVANS – H.D. ZACHARIAS (eds.), *Early Christian Literature and Intertextuality* (LNTS 391), London: T&T Clark, 2009, vol. 1, pp. 65–86, here p. 65.

³³ I use the term “Scriptures” in order to avoid the anachronistic “Old Testament” and the linguistic problems of the term “Hebrew” or “Greek Bible”. The plural corresponds with Matthew’s own use of αἱ γραφαί (21.42; 22.29; 26.54,56).

³⁴ The “classic” studies include K. STENDAHL, *The School of St. Matthew and its Use of the Old Testament* (ASNU 20), Uppsala: Gleerup, 1954; R.H. GUNDRY, *The Use of the Old Testament in St. Matthew’s Gospel with Special Reference to the Messianic Hope* (NovTSup 18), Leiden: Brill, 1967; W. ROTHFUCHS, *Die Erfüllungszitate des Matthäusevangeliums: Eine biblisch-theologische Untersuchung* (BWANT 88), Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1969; G. STRECKER, *Der Weg der Gerechtigkeit: Untersuchung zur Theologie des Matthäus* (FRLANT 82), Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1971, pp. 49–85; G. SOARES PRABHU, *The Formula Quotations in the Infancy Narrative of Matthew* (AnBib 63), Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1976. Among the more recent contributions are: D. SENIOR, “The Lure of the Formula Quotations: Re-assessing Matthew’s Use of the Old Testament with the Passion Narrative as Test Case”, in C.M. TUCKETT (ed.), *The Scrip-*

The relevant texts are: 1.22–23 (birth of Jesus); 2.15 (flight to Egypt); 2.17–18 (killing of the infants); 2.23 (move to Nazareth); 4.14–16 (mission in Galilee); 8.17 (healing); 12.17–21 (secrecy motif); 13.35 (use of parables); 21.4–5 (entry into Jerusalem); 27.9–10 (death of Judas); cf. also 26.54 and 26.56. Without going into the whole discussion, there are a few aspects which are more or less uncontested: first, the characteristic formula of introduction (with the verb πληρώω) is not attested in other texts. Though the closest model stems from Mk 14.49 (ἵνα πληρωθῶσιν αἱ γραφαί)³⁵, the redactional character of the Matthean introductory formula is obvious.³⁶ Secondly, the textual form of the formula quotations does not always correspond to the (known) Septuagint tradition.³⁷ Thirdly, the formula quotations are never spoken by characters within the narrative but represent the “voice” of the narrator.³⁸

The narrator in the first canonical Gospel, being mostly a covert non-intrusive narrator, makes his voice audible through these explicit intertextual comments and leads the implied reader by giving explicit interpretations of the events narrated.³⁹ If one applies Pfister’s parameter of auto-

tures in the Gospels (BETL 131), Leuven: University Press, 1997, pp. 89–115; J. MILER, *Les citations d’accomplissement dans l’Évangile de Matthieu. Quand Dieu se rend présent en toute humanité* (AnBib 140), Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1999; R. BEATON, *Isaiah’s Christ in Matthew’s Gospel* (SNTSMS 123), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002; M.J.J. MENKEN, *Matthew’s Bible: The Old Testament Text of the Evangelist* (BETL 173), Leuven: University Press, 2004; C.L. BLOMBERG, “Matthew”, in G.K. BEALE – D.A. CARSON (eds.), *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2007, pp. 1–109; U. LUZ, *Matthew. A Commentary*, Vol. 1: *Matthew 1–7* (Hermeneia), Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007, pp. 125–131; C.M. MOSS, *The Zechariah Tradition and the Gospel of Matthew* (BZNW 156), Berlin – New York, NY: de Gruyter, 2008; T.R. HATINA (ed.), *Biblical Interpretation in Early Christian Gospels*, Vol. 2: *The Gospel of Matthew* (LNTS 310), London: T&T Clark, 2008; M. KONRADT, “Die Rezeption der Schrift im Matthäusevangelium in der neueren Forschung”, in *Theologische Literaturzeitung* 135 (2010), pp. 919–932.

³⁵ Cf. also Lk 22.37 (with τελέω instead of πληρώω); John 12.38; 13.18; 15.25; 17.12; 18.9,32; 19.24,36.

³⁶ Cf. G. STANTON, “Matthew”, in D.A. CARSON – H.G.M. WILLIAMSON (eds.), *It is Written: Scripture Citing Scripture. Essays in Honour of Barnabas Lindars*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988, pp. 205–219 (215).

³⁷ The most extensive study on the problem of textual-form is now MENKEN, *Bible*.

³⁸ To be sure, there is a number of quotations from Scripture in Matthew’s Gospel spoken by Jesus (4.4,7,10; 5.21,27,31,33,38,43; 9.13; 11.10; 12.7; 13.14–15; 15.4,8–9; 19.4–5,18–19; 21.13,16,42; 22.32,37,39,44; 26.31) with only three exceptions (the priests and scribes in 2.5–6, John the Baptist in 3.3 and Satan in 4.6). However, the Matthean introductory formula is never used in these instances.

³⁹ On “covert” and “overt narrators”, cf. S. CHATMAN, *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film*, Ithaca – London: Cornell University Press, 1978, pp. 196–262. Chatman emphasizes that “[c]ommentary, since it is gratuitous, conveys the overt

reflexivity to Matthew's narrative, the most obvious aspect to focus on is the conspicuous presence of special introductory formulae which link scriptural intertexts and Matthean narrative by the concept of "fulfilment". The verb πληρόω literally means "fill, make full".⁴⁰ Since Jesus presents his mission in terms of "fulfilling" (5.17; cf. 3.15) the concept of "making full" can be considered a leading metaphor for Matthew's intertextuality.⁴¹ The presence of scriptural quotations in Matthew's narrative is thus not an "external" but an "inchoative" element. They mark the story of Israel as the beginning of the story of Jesus. The Scriptures are integral to the Matthean Jesus story because, according to its theological understanding, Jesus is integral to the story of Israel as its inherent goal. Nothing could make this understanding clearer than opening with a genealogy (1.2–17) which retells Israel's story in its most condensed possible form (some forty names) leading from Abraham to Jesus.⁴² We may rightly ask whether this conceptual framework is theologically plausible; we may also suspect that this emphasis may have a pragmatic level of apologetics or polemics – but with regards to the analysis of Matthean intertextuality these critical matters are marginal. The concept of "fulfilment" is the auto-reflexive frame for the narrator's inclusion of scriptural quotations and allusions. This, of course, does not mean that an intertextual approach to Matthew has to limit itself to the "formula quotations" or that they are to be given precedence over all other forms of intertextuality.⁴³ The following case studies, which are in no way exhaustible, may serve to illustrate the wide scope of intertextuality.

narrator's voice more distinctly than any feature short of explicit self-mention" (p. 228). On commentary as interpretation, cf. pp. 237–241.

⁴⁰ Cf. Mt 13.48 ("When the net was full..."); 23.32 ("Fill up the measure...").

⁴¹ The passive form πληρωθή may denote divine activity (cf. DAVIES – ALLISON, *Matthew*, pp. 211; MILER, *Citations*, p. 23).

⁴² On the narrative character of the genealogy, cf. MAYORDOMO, *Anfang*, pp. 220–221 and now *in extenso* J. KENNEDY, *The Recapitulation of Israel: Use of Israel's History in Matthew 1:1–4:11* (WUNT 2.257), Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008, pp. 35–52, 76–100.

⁴³ SENIOR, "Lure", has correctly warned against an excessive emphasis on the formula quotations. The Scriptures pervade Matthew's narrative also in the form of allusions, vocabulary, style, genre models, characterization and dramatic structure. D.A. ALLISON (*The New Moses: A Matthean Typology*, Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1993) formulates guidelines to uncover typological allusions which reflect authorial intention (pp. 19–23) but still has to leave space for "mature judgment" based on intuition (p. 21). The study of HUIZENGA, *New Isaac* follows creatively the lines of R. HAYS (cf. pp. 43–74).

2. Case Studies⁴⁴

(a) The “Book of Genesis” (1.1a)

The intertextual complexity of the Matthean narrative is evident from its very first words: βίβλος γενέσεως. Interpreters are divided as to whether Mt 1.1 should be viewed as the title of the whole book or only of the birth story (basically chapter 1).⁴⁵ Both words together form a syntactic unit clearly pointing to Gen 2.4 and 5.1.⁴⁶ Exegetes have taken great pains to secure the exact text form the author was using. Many of these efforts, however, are frustrated not only by the fact that the fragmentary character of the material does not lend itself to such certainties but also because in a residual oral culture the idea of an “original” or “fixed text” may amount to a far-reaching anachronism.⁴⁷ Hence, if we look into our available texts in the Greek or Hebrew Bible(s) we should not too easily give in to the tempting phantasy that we are actually looking at the “same” text the evangelist or his original audience had in mind. At best, we manage to single out some textual samples from the endless “kristevan” net of intertexts, thereby pausing the dynamic exchange of texts.

We can compare meticulously the Greek and the Hebrew wording and observe that βίβλος in Gen 2.4 does not have a Hebrew counterpart and that it probably is an assimilation to 5.1 where it translates ספר. We can analyze the context of both pre-texts and conclude that at least in the LXX version they clearly serve as introductory formulae. If we read the LXX version against the background of the specific Platonic interests of Alexandrian Judaism, we may suspect that juxtaposing “heaven and earth” and γένεσις in 2.4 reflects Platonic cosmogony.⁴⁸ We can further look at Jewish interpretations of Gen 2.4 and 5.1 in order to arrive at a more complete intertextual “genealogy” for Mt 1.1.⁴⁹ Finally, we can identify redactional

⁴⁴ The present article gives me an opportunity to update and revise some of my exegetical thoughts developed in MAYORDOMO, *Anfang*, pp. 196–345, to which I refer for fuller argumentation in some cases.

⁴⁵ The different positions are aptly summarized in W. DAVIES – D.A. ALLISON, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to Saint Matthew* (ICC), Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1988, vol. 1, pp. 149–150.

⁴⁶ Gen 2.4: αὕτη ἡ βίβλος γενέσεως οὐρανοῦ καὶ γῆς. 5.1: αὕτη ἡ βίβλος γενέσεως ἀνθρώπων.

⁴⁷ The following title is indicative of a recent trend in textual criticism: G.D. MARTIN, *Multiple Originals: New Approaches to Hebrew Bible Textual Criticism*, Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2010.

⁴⁸ Cf. M. RÖSEL, *Übersetzung als Vollendung der Auslegung: Studien zur Genesis-Septuaginta* (BZAW 223), Berlin – New York: de Gruyter, 1994, pp. 57–58.

⁴⁹ PHILO, for instance, betrays a Platonic understanding of Gen 2.4 (*All* 1.19; cf. also *Op* 129; *All* 1.21; *Post* 65; *Quaest in Gn* 1.1): βίβλος refers to the “perfect Logos”, the rational principle of cosmic order, in which everything was “written” beforehand. The

changes (deletions, alterations, and expansions) and draw conclusions about the production or reception of the text. In this case, the most striking change is the “deletion” of αὕτη ἡ in Mt 1.1 which underlines its character as a title and draws a possible connection to the Greek title of the first book of the Bible.⁵⁰ Bearing in mind the wide circulation of γένεσις as a book title⁵¹, one can assume that the connection between Matthew’s Gospel and the book of Genesis was as easy to establish as it is for us to link Joyce’s *Ulysses* to Homer or Graham Greene’s *Monsignor Quixote* to Cervantes.⁵²

In terms of volume or selectivity Mt 1.1 is not a long “quotation”; it is not even tagged as such. But, standing at the beginning of the narrative as a title, its communicative relevance is extremely high. Matthew’s story not only opens with a strong emphasis on its principal intertext, the Scriptures of Israel in their Greek version, but it also inscribes elegantly the story of Jesus into the “sacred narrative” of Israel. In some sense, Matthew’s narrative is not simply dependent on the Scriptures it refers to; it rather presents itself as “Scripture”. The intertextual linking of the “Genesis” of the world (Gen *titulus*; 2.4), of humanity (Gen 5.1) and of Jesus Christ (Mt 1.1) opens many possibilities for reflection, which cannot be controlled by the author’s intention. However, a reading sensitive to the hermeneutical intricacies of intertextuality should refrain from imposing a simple cause-and-

“book” is therefore identical with “creation” (γένεσεως is read as epexegetical genitive). In Gen 5.1, Philo identifies αὕτη with Enoch (Gen 4.26) who typifies hope as an essential quality of a human being (*Det* 139). The “book” again is not a printed book but rather the “book of nature” (*Abr* 11; *Quaest in Gen* 1.80).

⁵⁰ I have developed this idea more fully in MAYORDOMO, *Anfang*, pp. 211–213 (cf. DAVIES – ALLISON, *Matthew*, vol. 1, p. 151; R.E. BROWN, *The Birth of the Messiah*, Garden City: Doubleday, 1993, p. 66, n. 7, and recently LUZ, “Intertexts”, pp. 128–129; C.A. EVANS, “‘The Book of the Genesis of Jesus Christ’: The Purpose of Matthew in Light of the Incipit”, in HATINA, *Biblical Interpretation*, pp. 61–72 [63–67]). The discussion regarding the “extent” of the title’s range seems rather futile to me. Full thematic correspondence between a title and the contents of a book was something ancient readers would not expect from a title. The fact that from chapter 2 on, Matthew’s story shows no explicit connection with the theme of γένεσις is, thus, a negligible aspect. The possible link to the first book of the Bible is downplayed by J. NOLLAND, *The Gospel of Matthew: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (NIGTC), Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005, pp. 71–72.

⁵¹ Greek γένεσις as a title is attested in B, S (A has γένεσις κόσμου) and reflected in PHILO, *Poster C.* 127; *Aet. Mund.* 19; MELITO in EUSEBIUS, *Hist. eccl.* IV.26.14 and ORIGEN in EUSEBIUS, *Hist. eccl.* VI.25.2; Justin, *Dial* 20.1. In *Abr.* 1–2, PHILO reflects not only on the title γένεσις but also on its relation to the whole book.

⁵² Intertextual titles have an especially high “signal value”; cf. U. BROICH, “Formen der Markierung von Intertextualität”, in BROICH – PEISTER, *Intertextualität*, pp. 35–37; HELBIG, *Intertextualität*, pp. 106–111; W. KARRER, “Titles and Mottoes as Intertextual Devices”, in PLETT, *Intertextuality*, pp. 122–134.

effect scheme on the relationship between pre-text and text. Intertexts as sacred and venerated as those invoked by Mt 1.1 are not simply the “cause” of Christological statements; they rather serve to trigger emotions, they are more impressionistic than straightforwardly informative.

(b) *Tamar in the Genealogy (1.3a)*

Matthew’s genealogy (1.2–17) is in itself an “echo” of genealogies in the Scriptures.⁵³ According to Genette’s nomenclature, this is first of all a case of “architextuality”, viz. a reference to a genre model.⁵⁴ The genealogy as a way of introducing its main figure unfolds a fascinating play between the demands of the genre model, the expectations of the readers and the performance of the text. Matthew’s narrator clearly transgresses some genre-demands by interrupting the monotonous flow from one generation to the next at some points. In particular, the presence of four (or five, including Mary) women has called for a series of different explanations.⁵⁵ I would like to concentrate on the intertextual possibilities of one name: Tamar. An intertextual reference consisting of only one word (minimal selectivity) may not look too promising, but names constitute one of the most important ways of interrelating texts.⁵⁶ In that respect, Matthew’s genealogy reconfigures “characters” from different parts of Scriptures and builds a new “plot” leading to the birth of Jesus. One stage along this way is Tamar. The name recalls the story of Judah and Tamar (Gen 38) – a story with a rich Jewish “Wirkungsgeschichte”.⁵⁷ This history is part of a inter-

⁵³ Most of these can be found in the books of Genesis (e.g. 4.1–2, 17–26; 5.1–32; 10.1–32; 11.10–32; 25.1–6, 12–26; 35.21–26; 36.1–43; 46.8–27) and 1 Chronicles (ch. 1–9).

⁵⁴ LUZ, “Intertexts”, p. 128: “In the case of the genealogy, the selectivity of the biblical intertext is very low – the genealogy refers to the whole Bible – but its communicability and structurality are high”.

⁵⁵ This is not the place to repeat my arguments in MAYORDOMO, *Anfang*, pp. 243–250. The proposal that non-Jewish identity accounts for the presence of all four women has been recently reinforced by M. KONRADT, *Israel, Kirche und die Völker im Matthäusevangelium* (WUNT 215), Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007, pp. 288–292. For a different approach that takes all five women into consideration, cf. P.-B. SMIT, “Something about Mary? Remarks about the Five Women in the Matthean Genealogy”, in *NTS* 56 (2010), pp. 191–207.

⁵⁶ W.G. MÜLLER has coined the concept of “interfigurality”: “Interfigurality: A Study on the Interdependence of Literary Figures”, in PLETT, *Intertextuality*, pp. 101–121.

⁵⁷ Cf. R. BAUCKHAM, “Tamar’s Ancestry and Rahab’s Marriage”, in *NovT* 37 (1995), pp. 314–320; C.E. HAYES, “The Midrashic Career of the Confession of Judah (Genesis 38:26)”, in *VT* 45 (1995), pp. 62–81, 174–187; E.M. MENN, *Judah and Tamar (Genesis 38) in Ancient Jewish Exegesis: Studies in Literary Form and Hermeneutics* (JSJSup 51), Leiden: Brill, 1997; C. WASSÉN, “The Story of Judah and Tamar in the Eyes of the Earliest Interpreters”, in *Literature and Theology* 8 (1994), pp. 354–366; W. HILBRANDS,

textual net informing the reception of Tamar's name in the Matthean genealogy.

The intertextual "career" of Tamar starts within the Scriptures: in Ruth 4.11–12, she is praised alongside Rachel and Leah who "built up the house of Israel". The Jewish reception of this story concentrates mainly on questions of culpability. The wording of LXX Gen 38.26a (perfect form instead of a Hebrew comparative: Δεδικαίωται Θαμαρ ἢ ἐγώ) makes clear that Tamar is right on account of her actions. The retelling in Jubilees 41 expands on Judah's guilt for a sexual offence (*Jub.* 41.23–28; cf. *T. Jud.* 12.1–12) but introduces Judah's Canaanite wife in her stock role as schemer (*Jub.* 41.2,7; *T. Jud.* 10.6). The first-person narrator in *T. Jud.* presents himself as a tragic hero, a victim of alcohol, lust and the sexual power of women (8.2; 11.1–4; 12.3,5–6; 13.3–8; 14.5–6; 15.5–6).⁵⁸ Later Rabbinic texts seek to alleviate the patriarch's guilt by emphasizing the guiding hand of God leading eventually to the Messiah.⁵⁹ In *L.A.B.* 9.15–16 Tamar is praised by Amram, the father of Moses, as someone who perseveres in producing offspring and is called "our mother". Philo interprets Tamar as an allegory for virtue, victory and wisdom (*Deus* 137; *Congr.* 124–126; *Leg.* III.74; *Fug.* 149–150, 154). Tamar's non-Jewish ancestry is not mentioned in Gen 38. Some later texts trace her lineage to Aram (*Jub.* 41.1–2; *T. Jud.* 10.1,6).⁶⁰ *L.A.B.* 9.5 comes to Tamar's defence, "for her intent was not fornication, but being unwilling to separate from the sons of Israel she reflected and said, 'It is better for me to die for having intercourse with my father-in-law than to have intercourse with Gentiles (*gentes*).'"⁶¹ The text seems to consider Tamar as an Israelite or at least a proselyte.

The "interfigurality" of Tamar's name does not primarily evoke the theme of non-Jewish identity but recalls a complex story with a rich "after-

Heilige oder Hure? Die Rezeptionsgeschichte von Juda und Tamar (Genesis 38) von der Antike bis zur Reformationszeit (CBET 48), Leuven: Peeters, 2007.

⁵⁸ Cf. at length MENN, *Judah*, pp. 107–213.

⁵⁹ Cf. D.U. ROTTZOLL, *Rabbinischer Kommentar zum Buch Genesis* (SJ 14), Berlin – New York: de Gruyter, 1994, pp. 438–452.

⁶⁰ There are two persons with the same name: Aram, son of Sem (Gen 10.22; *Jub.* 7.18; 9.5; cf. PHILO, *Virt.* 221), and Aram, a descendant of Terach, Abraham's father (Gen 22.21; *Jub.* 34.20). Especially BAUCKHAM, "Tamar's Ancestry", pp. 314–318 emphasizes that Tamar was considered part of the family of Abraham.

⁶¹ D.J. HARRINGTON, "Pseudo-Philo", in J.H. CHARLESWORTH (ed.), *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, New York: Doubleday, 1985, p. 315. The consequent rejection of intermarriage is a main topic in *L.A.B.* (cf. 18.13–14; 21.1; 30.1; 43.5; 44.7; 45.3).

life". Once one enters the intertextual net, many possibilities unfold which enable readers to enrich their understanding of the text.⁶²

(c) *The First Formula Quotation (1.22–23)*

Directly after the speech of the angel, the narrator marks the significance of the narrated events by an explicit intertextual reference.⁶³ The voice of the angel (1.20–21) and that of the narrator (1.22–23) are in such close parallelism that their communicative authority can be considered to be on the same level.⁶⁴ The question is: what exactly is being interpreted by the following explicit quotation? Τοῦτο δὲ ὅλον γέγονεν can be read in a limited way: the birth story properly speaking; or rather more broadly: the history of Israel that has been retold in the genealogy.⁶⁵ Everything from Abraham on moves towards one goal: the birth of Jesus.

The quoted text does not come as a surprise, at least not for readers who know their Scriptures.⁶⁶ By quoting the text, the narrator "forces" the reader to "listen" to the Jesus-story in light of the promised "Emmanuel". We have here a clear form of reader guidance. By giving an explicit text (Is 7.14), the narrator unfolds a dynamic reading that is difficult to control. The "intrusion" of the old text into a new literary context may induce the reader to reflect and meditate on possible interconnections. Some ambiguities of the Hebrew version are absent in the Greek text.⁶⁷ A vague messian-

⁶² I would, therefore, strongly hesitate to narrow down Tamar's presence to just one single aspect; thus e.g. J.P. HEIL, "The Narrative Roles of the Women in Matthew's Genealogy", in *Biblica* 72 (1991), p. 540: "The explicit mention of Tamar, then, reminds the reader that sinfulness was connected with the Davidic kingship from its very beginning with Judah."

⁶³ Theoretically the quotation in 1.22–23 could be read as still being spoken by the angel. However, it is far more probable that we "hear" the narrator's voice speaking in 1.22–23. Traditionally, the speech of the angel ends with the commission to give a name to the promised child. W.J.C. WEREN, "The Five Women in Matthew's Genealogy", in *CBQ* 59 (1997), p. 294: "These two verses function exclusively as part of the communication between the narrator and his readers."

⁶⁴ D.A. HAGNER, *Matthew* (WBC 33A), Dallas, TX: Word, 1993, vol. 1, p. 20: "This [...] reveals the evangelist in his role as teacher. He will not only tell the story but also convey its significance."

⁶⁵ Similarly, the formula in 26.56 does not explicitly delimit its range.

⁶⁶ As HAGNER, *Matthew*, pp. 14–15 rightly points out the whole pericope has been modelled according to Is 7.14.

⁶⁷ The LXX version has to be analyzed in its own right: G. GUTHKNECHT, "Das Motiv der Jungfrauengeburt in religionsgeschichtlicher Beleuchtung", Th.Diss. Greifswald, 1952, pp. 31–74; M. RÖSEL, "Die Jungfrauengeburt des endzeitlichen Emmanuel: Jesaja 7 in der Übersetzung der Septuaginta", in *Jahrbuch für biblische Theologie* 6 (1991), pp. 135–151:136–145; J. LUST, "A Septuagint Christ Preceding Jesus Christ? Messianism in the Septuagint Exemplified in Isa 7,10–17", in K. HAUSPIE (ed.), *Messianism and the*

ic understanding can be glimpsed in the way the child is introduced. Unlike the Hebrew text, the Greek highlights the distinctive character of the child in a very specific way: he has the ability to distinguish good from evil *before* he knows either (LXX Is 7.15–16). As Martin Rösel has pointed out, the Septuagint version implies an understanding of the child as a heavenly gifted figure.⁶⁸ Although other textual elements from the Isaiah context may enrich the interpretation of the Matthean narrative,⁶⁹ the narrator makes sure that no reader misses the main point: the narrative makes Scripture “complete”. Not only the birth but also the peculiar circumstances of Mary’s pregnancy make sense within this neatly tied net of prophetic intertextuality. Over against the name of Jesus commanded by the angel (1.21), the scriptural quotation introduces a new name. The slight transposition from singular καλέσεις (LXX) to plural καλέσουσιν (Mt) shows that the second name in some sense “exceeds” the first one: it is not the individual name given by the father, but a programmatic “theological” name.⁷⁰ The plural form clearly transcends the present plot development. The name “God-with-us” foreshadows the development of the whole narrative and leads the readers to search for ways of reading that may actually make them part of those who “call” Jesus “Emmanuel”.⁷¹ It is a striking fact that Jesus is not called “Emmanuel” in the narrative. This communal dimension develops its own dynamics *outside* the text (see esp. Mt 18.20; 28.20).

(d) *The Star – An Intertextual Signal? (2.2)*

The “star of Bethlehem” has attracted many admirers not only astrological but also textual ones. Many exegetes entertain the possibility of an allusion

Septuagint. Collected Essays (BETL 178), Leuven: University Press, 2004, pp. 211–225; R.L. TROXEL, “Isaiah 7,14–16 through the Eyes of the Septuagint”, in *ETL* 79 (2003), pp. 1–22. The contributions in M.A. KNIBB (ed.), *The Septuagint and Messianism* (BETL 105), Leuven: University Press, 2006 substantiate the possibility that the Septuagint provides evidence for early Jewish messianism.

⁶⁸ RÖSEL, “Jungfrauengeburt”, 149.151. For a different interpretation of the text, see LUST, „Septuagint“.

⁶⁹ M. OBERWEIS has called attention to many elements (maybe too many) from LXX Isaiah that have shaped the wording of Mt 1–2: “Beobachtungen zum AT-Gebrauch in der matthäischen Kindheitsgeschichte”, in *NTS* 35 (1989), pp. 131–149 (141–146). W. CARTER, “Evoking Isaiah: Matthean Soteriology and an Intertextual Reading of Isaiah 7–9 and Matthew 1:23 and 4:15–16”, in *JBL* 119 (2000), pp. 503–520 (508–513), suggests that the whole context of Isaiah 7–9 underlines God’s salvific intentions in view of an imperial threat.

⁷⁰ The narrator’s translation (ὁ ἐστὶν μεθερμηνεούμενον μεθ’ ἡμῶν ὁ θεός) echoes LXX Is 8.8 (μεθ’ ἡμῶν ὁ θεός) and 8.10 (μεθ’ ἡμῶν κύριος ὁ θεός).

⁷¹ For the rich scriptural tradition of God’s being *with* his people, cf. D.D. KUPP, *Matthew’s Emmanuel: Divine Presence and God’s People in the First Gospel* (SNTSMS 90), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996, pp. 138–156.

to Num 24.17.⁷² To be sure, the connections on a verbal level are rather low.⁷³ On a structural level, some narrative similarities spring to the mind: the Gentile prophet Balaam blesses Israel, foretells a mighty ruler and interferes with a wicked king. Somewhat similarly, the Gentile μάγοι come to adore the child and interfere with king Herod. Traces of an early Jewish messianic interpretation of Num 24.17 may corroborate the plausibility of an intertextual link between both texts.⁷⁴ Obviously Num 24.17 was not only available both to author and readers, it can also be connected in meaningful ways with the Matthean narrative context. On the other hand, the narrator does not care to mark his allusion, the volume of verbal correspondence is rather low (basically: the “star”) and the book of Numbers is not explicitly quoted in Matthew’s Gospel.⁷⁵ There are some structural similarities but it seems rather implausible that the Balaam episode serves as the model for the structure of the Matthean narrative.

This may be a good example of “aleatoric” intertextuality. When neither the text nor a historical account of the cultural context in which the text was produced makes a decision more or less plausible, we may assume that

⁷² Cf. BROWN, *Birth*, pp. 190–196; H. FRANKEMÖLLE, *Matthäus: Kommentar*, Düsseldorf: Patmos, 1994, vol. 1, pp. 166–167; J. GNILKA, *Das Matthäusevangelium* (HTKNT I/1), Freiburg i.Br.: Herder, 1986, vol. 1, pp. 36–37. The traditions concernig Balaam have been analyzed by G. VERMES, *Scripture and Tradition in Judaism* (StPB 4), Leiden: Brill, 1961, pp. 127–177; J.T. GREENE, “The Balaam Figure and Type before, during, and after the Period of the Pseudepigrapha”, in *JSP* 8 (1991), pp. 67–110; G.H. VAN KOOTEN – J. VAN RUITEN (eds.), *The Prestige of the Pagan Prophet: Balaam in Judaism, Early Christianity and Islam* (Themes in Biblical Narrative 11), Leiden: Brill, 2008; J. ZSENGELLÉR, “Changes in the Balaam-Interpretation in the Hellenistic Jewish Literature (LXX, Philo, Pseudo-Philo and Josephus)”, in H. LICHTENBERGER – U. MITTMANN-RICHERT (eds.), *Biblical Figures in Deuterocanonical and Cognate Literature* (Deuterocanonical and Cognate Literature Yearbook 2008), Berlin – New York: de Gruyter, 2009, pp. 487–506.

⁷³ LXX Num 24.17: ἀνατελεῖ ἄστρον ἐξ Ἰακωβ, καὶ ἀναστήσεται ἄνθρωπος ἐξ Ἰσραὴλ (“A star shall rise up from Jacob, and a man shall arise out of Israel”). Mt 2.2,7,9–10 uses ἀστήρ while LXX uses the more general ἄστρον. LXX ἀνατελεῖ may have an echo in Matthew’s ἐν τῇ ἀνατολῇ. In Num 23.7 Balaam is said to come ἀπ’ ἀνατολῶν like the μάγοι in Mt 2.1. Some of the connections drawn by BROWN, *Birth*, p. 193 or VERMES, *Scripture*, pp. 172–173, are far more subtle.

⁷⁴ The messianic character of texts like CD 7,19; 4QTest 9–13; 1QM 11,6 is disputed. TestLev 18,3; TestJud 24,1 may have been influenced by Christian redaction. A possible messianic interpretation of Bar Kokhba as a “star from Jacob” (jTaan 4,8/68d) or evidence from the targumim (M. PÉREZ FERNÁNDEZ, *Tradiciones mesiánicas en el Targum Palestiniense*, Jerusalem – Valencia: Institución San Jerónimo, 1981, pp. 271–282) is hardly relevant for the present Matthean context.

⁷⁵ However, Mt 9.36b (“like sheep without a shepherd”) echoes Num 27.17. Possible allusions are Mt 8.2 (the healing of leprosy in Num 12.10,13); Mt 11.29 (the gentleness of Moses in Num 12.3). Mt 5.33–37 (do not swear) can be vaguely connected to Num 30.3.

there are latent intertextual connections that are not necessarily connected with an author's intention or a reader's capabilities. Texts with such a high intertextual density as the early Christian ones are capable of connecting with many texts from Scriptures. The Matthean narrative has many intertextual "gems" for attentive readers. But again, an intertextual reading should be careful not to associate aleatoric connections too definitely with the author's intent; and it surely should refrain from using these connections as the basis for abstract theological constructions.

(e) *The Intertext of the Jewish Leaders (2.5–6)*

The Jewish leaders and the narrator of the Matthean Jesus story share a profound knowledge of Scripture. When interrogated by King Herod, the Jewish leaders have no reason to hesitate. They know from Scripture what the readers know from the narrative: Bethlehem is the birth place of the Messiah (cf. Joh 7.41–42). The combination of Micah 5.1 and 2Sam 5.2 betrays in its Matthean setting some peculiarities.⁷⁶ As a matter of fact, one may ask whether in ancient cultures, people who were used to *hear* texts would take notice of subtle differences between a text and a verbal model or "master copy". One element, though, may have caught their attention: over against the Scripture reference, the Jewish leaders emphasize that Bethlehem is *by no means* (οὐδαμῶς) the most insignificant among the rulers of Judah.⁷⁷ The negation attracts attention and functions precisely as an open alternation.⁷⁸ As the place of Jesus' birth, Bethlehem can hardly be considered "insignificant". This ironic reference achieves two effects: it uses Jesus to characterize Bethlehem (and not the other way round) and it makes the Jewish leaders the unknowing spokesmen for Matthean theology. The "blind guides", as the Matthean Jesus will later call the Jewish leaders (23.16), give credit to the Matthean Jesus on the basis of Scripture. Against their better judgment, they will stay on the side of Herod's power and violence. A second element calls for an explanation: the combination with 2Sam 5.2 is not really necessary for answering the king's question. The Jewish leaders, again unknowingly, witness to the messianic leader-

⁷⁶ The differences between the Greek and the Hebrew versions are negligible (cf. BROWN, *Birth*, pp. 184–186). On combining different texts, cf. D.I. BREWER, *Techniques and Assumptions in Jewish Exegesis before 70 CE* (TSAJ 30), Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1992, pp. 22–23, 67–68, 160.

⁷⁷ LXX Mi 5.1a: Καὶ σύ, Βηθλεὲμ οἶκος τοῦ Εφραθα, ὀλιγοστός εἰ τοῦ εἶναι ἐν χιλιάσιν Ἰουδα.

⁷⁸ Cf. R.T. FRANCE, "The Formula-Quotations of Matthew 2 and the Problem of Communication", in *NTS* 27 (1981), pp. 233–251 (242).

ship of Jesus (ἡγούμενος) as the perfect Davidic shepherd-king (ποιμανεῖ τὸν λαόν μου).⁷⁹

(f) *God Calls his Son from Egypt (2.14–15)*

The flight to Egypt gives way to a new formula quotation from the book of Hosea.⁸⁰ Hos 11.1 is the beginning of a short recapitulation of the basic story of Israel. The central sign of God's persistent love is his deliverance from slavery in Egypt. God's "son" in this context refers to the people of Israel (as in Ex 4.22–23). If text and pre-text are brought into conversation, a permutation between Israel and Jesus becomes evident. Both can be viewed as the "son" of God. This quotations thus starts a fascinating "dialogue" between Israel and the figure of Jesus in Matthew's Gospel (cf. especially Mt 4.1–11).

(g) *The Persecution of the Child (2.16)*

Stories of royal children persecuted by wicked rulers are inscribed deeply in our "cultural encyclopedia" (U. Eco). Not surprisingly, many studies have uncovered the literary indebtedness of some motifs in Mt 2 to popular narrative traditions in antiquity.⁸¹ Depending on the material one analyzes, different sets of motifs can be extracted.⁸² Although the haggadic material

⁷⁹ On the Sheperd-King imagery, cf. Y.S. CHAE, *Jesus as the Eschatological Davidic Shepherd: Studies in the Old Testament, Second Temple Judaism, and in the Gospel of Matthew* (WUNT 2.216), Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006, pp. 174–184; J. WILLITS, *Matthew's Messianic Shepherd-King: In Search of 'The Lost Sheep of the House of Israel'* (BZNW 147), Berlin – New York: de Gruyter, 2007, pp. 114–115.

⁸⁰ The introduction formula is the same as in 1.22. Hosea is generally an important point of reference for Matthew's story: in particular, Hos 6.6 is quoted in Mt 9.13 and 12.7. An allusion to Hos 2.1 is found in Mt 5.9, to Hos 6.2 in Mt 16.21 and to Hos 6.6 in Mt 23.23.

⁸¹ For a synoptic overview, cf. LUZ, *Matthew*, pp. 76–78; MAYORDOMO, *Anfang*, pp. 342–345. The literary motifs are analyzed in different contexts: G. BINDER, *Die Aussetzung des Königskindes Kyros und Romulus* (BKP 10), Meisenheim am Glan: Hain, 1964; J. COHEN, *The Origins and Evolution of the Moses Nativity Story* (SHR 58), Leiden: Brill, 1993; Z.P. THUNDY, *Buddha and Christ: Nativity Stories and Indian Traditions* (SHR 60), Leiden: Brill, 1993. Cf. the recent summary in D.J. PAUL, "Untypische" Texte im Matthäusevangelium? *Studien zu Charakter, Funktion und Bedeutung einer Textgruppe des matthäischen Sonderguts* (NTAbh N.F. 50), Münster: Aschendorff, 2005, pp. 155–159.

⁸² D.B. REDFORD, "The Literary Motif of the Exposed Child (cf. Ex. 2,1–10)", in *Nu-men* 14 (1967), pp. 209–228, analyzes 32 examples and constructs three types: "I. the child is exposed through shame at the circumstances of its birth; II. the king (or whoever is in power), either at the instigation of an oracle or simply because the child is a potential threat, seeks to kill the child who is fated to supplant him; III. a general massacre

concerning the birth of Moses is the most important point of reference for the Matthean narrative,⁸³ it is obvious that we cannot rule out the interplay of Mt 2 with many popular stories of birth and persecution. The use of a set of motifs brings a “touch of Exodus” into the narrative: the birth of a hero, a wicked ruler, the killing of children, flight, etc. In terms of intertextuality, this dimension of the Matthean story cannot be related to one single text. Genette’s concept of “architextuality” may be of help here: the story follows loosely a specific genre model.

(h) *Rachel Weeps* (2.17–18)

The model of “fulfilment” reaches its theological limits when the brutal murdering of children is narrated. How can this be part of scriptural witness? The high degree of intertextual auto-reflexivity becomes evident in a small but significant change in the wording of the introductory formula to the quotation from LXX Jer 38.15 (Hebrew: 31.15):⁸⁴ The narrator uses τότε instead of ἴνα. The finality of the narrated events is clearly toned down. By naming the prophet Jeremiah, the narrator probably calls to the mind his character as a “tragic” prophet.⁸⁵ The quotation emphasizes the reaction of grief (which is not part of the narrative) and recalls Rachel as a mother-type. This note of despair is not predominant in Jer 31. Again, the knowledge of the pre-text’s context can help to “colour” the understanding of Mt 2 with a note of hope.⁸⁶

(i) *Mt 2.23 – Unde?*

Exegetes are used to find intertexts which are not explicitly tagged. Mt 2.23 is the opposite case: the quotation is tagged but the quoted text cannot be found in a known tradition. It is, as France has put it, an “elusive ‘quo-

endangers the life of the child” (p. 211). In Mt 2 we would find elements of Redford’s type II and III.

⁸³ Cf. Jos., *Ant* 2,205–9; further material in A. VÖGTLE, *Messias und Gottessohn: Herkunft und Sinn der matthäischen Geburts- und Kindheitsgeschichte*, Düsseldorf: Patmos, 1971, pp. 32–41.

⁸⁴ The verbal dissimilarities between the different versions (Hebrew and LXX A, B) are not relevant for the process of reception.

⁸⁵ Jeremiah is also named in Mt 27.9 (death of Judas): τότε ἐπληρώθη τὸ ῥηθὲν διὰ Ἰερεμίου (the quotation following corresponds to Zech 11.13). Cf. M.J.J. MENKEN, “The References to Jeremiah in the Gospel according to Matthew (2.17; 16.14; 27.9)”, in *ETL* 60 (1984), pp. 5–24. For the Jewish view on Jeremiah, cf. C. WOLFF, *Jeremia im Frühjudentum und Urchristentum* (TU 118), Berlin: Akademie, 1976; M. KNOWLES, *Jeremiah in Matthew’s Gospel* (JSNTSup 68), Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993, pp. 247–264.

⁸⁶ Cf. DAVIES – ALLISON, *Matthew*, vol. 1, pp. 267–269; FRANCE, “Formula-Quotations”, pp. 245–246; HAYS, “Reconfigured Torah”, p. 176.

tation”.⁸⁷ The great amount of work that has gone into finding a plausible pre-text has produced many, and somewhat complicated, suggestions⁸⁸ ranging from a reference to Samson’s Nazirite vow (Judg 13.5,7; 16.17)⁸⁹ to an interconnection with Is 11.1⁹⁰ or a rather general witness to Jesus’ modest provenance. The arguments on all sides seem to neutralize each other. Interestingly enough, the meaning of the whole section 2.19–23 is pretty clear: the family’s settlement in Nazareth “fulfills” a scriptural utterance that witnesses to a person coming from that town.⁹¹ We may conclude that either the pre-text was known from sources not available to us or that the narrator is so reliable that he can make such a connection without having a definitive text in mind. After all, Nazareth is never mentioned in the Scriptures.⁹²

III. Conclusion

Intertextuality in practice is not a set of clear-cut methodological procedures to be applied mechanically to a text and its pre-text. If one wishes to operate on the basis of the (idealized, romanticized) author and his “intention”, the search for the pre-text (in its historically most reliable form) and the analysis of the eventual redactional changes will constitute the most important aspects of the exegetical work. The specific ways the author “uses” his or her pre-texts can be evaluated according to ancient modes of interpretation. Hermeneutically, however, “intertextuality” is not interchangeable with classical “influence studies”. From an intertextual perspective, the author not only “uses” a text or is “influenced” by other authors, he or she is only capable of writing by virtue of all the texts which have shaped his or her specific way of speaking.

Intertextuality as an endless interplay between (at least) two texts and their contexts is a literary phenomenon impossible to pin down to one sin-

⁸⁷ R.T. FRANCE, *The Gospel of Matthew* (NICNT), Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2007, p. 95.

⁸⁸ Cf. DAVIES – ALLISON, *Matthew*, vol. 1, pp. 276–281; MILER, *Citations*, pp. 69–71.

⁸⁹ The Matthean Jesus shows no traces of being a “Nazirite” (cf. Mt 9.25; 11.19).

⁹⁰ This suggestion presupposes readers capable of recognizing a “homophonic” relation between Hebrew *nezer* and Greek Ναζωραῖος (cf. FRANCE, *Matthew*, pp. 92–93).

⁹¹ This is clearly the meaning of Ναζωραῖος in Mt 26.71 (where Matthew changes Ναζαρηνόσ in Mk 14.67); Lk 18.37; John 18.5,7; 19.19; Acts 2.22; 3.6; 4.10; 6.14; 22.8; 26.9.

⁹² Maybe the “change” in the introductory formula from “prophet” (1.22; 2.5,15; 13.35; 21.4: διὰ τοῦ προφήτου) to “prophets” (2.23: διὰ τῶν προφητῶν) points to the vagueness of Matthew’s intertext.

gle meaning. Even if one thinks that “authorial intention” guarantees the reconstruction of a unified meaning,⁹³ it is plain that once an author chooses to reconfigure his or her text according to other texts he or she is losing control over the possibilities of interconnecting these texts. Even from the point of view of an author, “intertextuality” opens a vast field of connotations which cannot be anticipated or limited by such a vague category as “intent”. Thus, every pre-text is an offer for readers to play, to dwell upon, to meditate upon and to see new aspects in texts.

An analysis of Mt 1–2, even when limited to concrete pre-texts, shows that a global understanding of intertextuality has much to recommend itself. The concrete examples are symptomatic upheavals within a complex web of textual interconnections. The pre-text does not only have a certain “function” within its new context (as a part of a complex mechanism), it belongs to “a discursive space of a culture”⁹⁴ out of which the new text emerges. In the case of Matthew, “Scripture” is not simply a stone pit for extracting texts; “Scripture” articulates a frame which makes the Matthean Jesus story meaningful. The dialogical structure inscribed in Matthew’s narrative is an agent of Christological reflection. The intertextual density of Mt 1–2 serves as reading instruction for the whole narrative and brings Jesus into connection with God’s story with Israel right from the beginning. Finally, an intertextual reading should respect and underline the fact that the dialogue between “texts” has – unlike the present article – no real end.

⁹³ For a skeptical position regarding “authorial intent”, cf. MAYORDOMO, *Anfang*, pp. 170–187.

⁹⁴ J. CULLER, *The Pursuit of Signs: Semiotics, Literature, Deconstruction* (Routledge Classics), London: Routledge, 2001, p. 114: Intertextuality is “less a name for a work’s relation to particular prior texts than a designation of its participation in the discursive space of a culture [...] the relationship between a text and the various [...] signifying practices of a culture”.